

The Telegraph

Council spending

Council chief executives enjoy pay rises as services are cut

Two thirds of Britain's highest-paid council bosses won pay rises last year despite Government orders to slash their salaries, an investigation by The Telegraph has found.



Joanna Killian

By [Heidi Blake \(http://www.telegraph.co.uk/journalists/heidi-blake/\)](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/journalists/heidi-blake/), [Sebastian Payne \(http://www.telegraph.co.uk/journalists/sebastian-payne/\)](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/journalists/sebastian-payne/) and [Conrad Quilty-Harper \(http://www.telegraph.co.uk/journalists/conrad-quilty-harper/\)](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/journalists/conrad-quilty-harper/)

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Town hall chief executives have seen their pay packets rise by as much as £17,000 while cutting front-line services, including libraries, care for the elderly and bin collections.

A survey of local authorities has established that 114 town hall chiefs earn more than the Prime Minister, despite calls from Eric Pickles, the Communities and Local Government Secretary, for them to take a 10 per cent pay cut.

They include chief executives who won plaudits by publicly announcing that they would slash their salaries last year but have instead replenished their pay packets with bonuses, allowances and perks.

Ministers last night reacted angrily to the disclosures. Grant Shapps, the local government minister, said: "It

is astonishing that it appears chief executives are finding elaborate ways to hike their pay through the back door.

"A culture of bumper pay and perks has no place in local government especially during these tough times across the public sector. Cutting pay is one thing chief executives can do to demonstrate a personal commitment to protecting the front line. I urge them to do the right thing and lead from the front."

[Council chief executive salaries: interactive table \(http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/council-spending/8714687/Council-chief-executive-salaries-201011-interactive-table-and-draft-accounts.html\)](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/council-spending/8714687/Council-chief-executive-salaries-201011-interactive-table-and-draft-accounts.html)

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[The taint of expenses \(http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/election-2010/7611859/General-Election-2010-The-taint-of-expenses.html\)](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/election-2010/7611859/General-Election-2010-The-taint-of-expenses.html)

[Cameron vows to bring dishonest MPs to justice \(http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/election-2010/7182994/MPs-expenses-David-Cameron-will-bring-in-law-to-stop-privilege-defence-to-expenses-crimes.html\)](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/election-2010/7182994/MPs-expenses-David-Cameron-will-bring-in-law-to-stop-privilege-defence-to-expenses-crimes.html)

[MPs' expenses: Labour MPs try to claim immunity \(http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newstoppers/mps-expenses/7168526/MPs-expenses-Labour-MPs-charged-with-false-accounting-try-to-claim-immunity.html\)](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newstoppers/mps-expenses/7168526/MPs-expenses-Labour-MPs-charged-with-false-accounting-try-to-claim-immunity.html)

An analysis of the accounts published by 128 of the largest councils in England and Wales has found that almost 70 per cent of town hall bosses earned more than David Cameron's £142,000 salary last year, while nearly half of them took home more than £200,000.

Of the 25 highest paid council chiefs, 16 were given pay rises.

The highest paid is Joanna Killian (<http://s.telegraph.co.uk/graphics/viewer.html?doc=238131-essex-county-council>), joint chief executive of Essex and Brentwood councils, who received £289,143, an increase of £4,000.

She previously promised to cut her pay by 5 per cent.

Essex county council's draft accounts for 2010-11 disclose that while Miss Killian's basic salary fell by

£4,000, she received a £6,900 bonus payment, £815 in expenses and a £4,021 pension contribution.

Her pay package rose as Tory-led Essex council announced that 450 jobs were to be cut as it struggled to find savings of £98 million.

The council has faced controversy after announcing plans to close 12 youth centres and cut library hours.

A spokesman said that by acting as chief executive of two councils Miss Killian ultimately saved taxpayers money.

The second highest-paid council boss in Britain last year was Geoff Alltimes (<http://s.telegraph.co.uk/graphics/viewer.html?doc=235221-hammersmith-and-fulham-london-borough-council>), who received a total of £281,666 for his role as the chief executive of Hammersmith and Fulham borough council and the local primary care trust, according to the draft accounts.

Despite a pay freeze across the council, Mr Alltimes took home £11,193 more last year than he earned in 2009 after receiving a supplementary payment for acting as returning officer in the local and general elections.

The Conservative borough is to cut funding for nine of its 15 children's centres and axe about 50 children's services posts as it looks to save £65 million over the next three years.

A spokesman for the council said Mr Alltimes's basic pay had not changed and his payment as a returning officer was due to "the system".

Kevin Lavery (<http://s.telegraph.co.uk/graphics/viewer.html?doc=235201-cornwall-council>), the chief executive of Cornwall council, agreed to take a 5 per cent pay cut last October.

But the council's draft accounts disclose that, while Mr Lavery's basic pay fell £2,500 to £197,500 last year, he claimed £9,527 in expenses, so his total pay package rose by £6,542 to £245,342.

An investigation by *The Telegraph* found earlier this year that Cornwall council had the highest credit card bill of any local authority in the country after staff spent millions on items including home cinemas and stays in hotels.

David McNulty (<http://s.telegraph.co.uk/graphics/viewer.html?doc=235289-surrey-county-council>), the chief executive of Surrey county council, claimed £12,053 to cover the cost of moving house last year, bringing his total pay to £253,133 including his salary and pension.

Mr McNulty, who took up his post in June 2009, is the fifth highest-paid council chief in Britain, earning 10 times more than the average British worker.

He was paid the relocation allowance, available to anyone who has to move to take a job at the council.

A spokesman for the council said no one was available to comment on Mr McNulty's pay last night.

Chris Williams (<http://s.telegraph.co.uk/graphics/viewer.html?doc=235189-buckinghamshire-county-council>)

, the Buckinghamshire chief executive, received £259,104 last year including benefits worth £4,770 and pension contributions of £47,334 — a small increase of £236 on 2009.

The council has switched off 1,600 of its 28,000 street lights to cut energy costs and introduced a pay freeze to trim its £125 million salary bill. Mr Williams, the third highest paid council boss, has confirmed that 550 jobs face the axe.

The Norfolk boss [David White](http://s.telegraph.co.uk/graphics/viewer.html?doc=235256-norfolk-county-council) (<http://s.telegraph.co.uk/graphics/viewer.html?doc=235256-norfolk-county-council>) earned £256,900 last year, including a bonus of £12,300, making him the fourth highest paid town hall chief.

The council is struggling to find £155 million in savings over the next three years, with 1,000 jobs under threat.

The country's lowest paid council boss last year was Tim Howes, of West Somerset District, who earned £61,000.

The average pay packet of the chief executives surveyed was £186,872.

The draft accounts analysed by *The Telegraph* have not yet been audited and are subject to revision.

[Chief executive salaries](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/8714687/Council-chief-executive-salaries-201011-interactive-table-and-draft-accounts.html) (<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/8714687/Council-chief-executive-salaries-201011-interactive-table-and-draft-accounts.html>) : interactive table

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